A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

SEPARATION

OF THE

MAJORITY of MEMBERS

FROM THE

ASSOCIATE PRESBYTERY

OF

DUNFERMLINE,

At PERTH, *May* 5th, 1747.

4735.aaa.29.

TOGETHER WITH

An EXACT DOUBLE of the MINUTES of the ſaid SEPARATING MAJORITY on that Occaſion, with OBSERVATIONS upon *them.*

AS ALSO,

A COPY of a LETTER ſent by the MEMBERS of the ASSOCIATE SYNOD, which met at *Stirling* in *June* 1747, to their *Separating Brethren*, propoſing a Meeting with them, for PRAYER and CONFERENCE, anent our *preſent Differences*; together with the ANSWER of *theſe Brethren*, and REMARKS upon the *ſame.*

GLASGOW:

Printed for J. NEWLANDS, and Sold by him at his Shop in the Head of the *Gallowgate*; and by A. NORRY in *Perth*, A. WEBSTER in *Kirkaldy*; J. BEUGO in *Dunfermline*; J. JAFFREY in *Stirling*; Baillie CADEL in *Haddington*; W. SMITH in *Edinburgh*; G. PATON in *Linlithgow*; J. PATON in *Kilmarnock*; and T. CAVERHILL in *Jedburgh.*

M. DCC. XLVII.

A NARRATIVE, &c.

AT *Perth*, *May* 5th, 1747. Which Day the Moderator, and moſt Part of the Members of the Aſſociate Preſbytery of *Dunfermline* and *Perth*, met at *Perth*, according to the Appointment of laſt ordinary Meeting of Preſbytery at *Ceres*, which had adjourned till this Day at this Place.

The Moderator, Mr. *Thomas Mair*, before he would conſtitute the Preſbytery, made a Speech to this Effect:

" That, as there had happened an Event in Pro-
" vidence, ſince laſt Meeting of Preſbytery, which
" would occaſion them to conſtitute upon another
" Footing than formerly, he behoved to give ſome
" Account of the Occaſion of their ſo doing, in or-
" der to pave the Way for the Conſtitution;" and added, " That, before he did ſo, he would deſire a " Brother to pray." And Mr. *Moncrieff* being deſired, prayed accordingly.

After Prayer, and ſome extrajudicial Converſation, the Moderator read the Paper, which he ſaid was in order to pave the Way for their Conſtitution. That Paper contained a Narrative of the Controverſy concerning the condemning the Religious Clauſe in ſome Burgeſs Oaths, of the Separation, and the Queſtion upon which the Breach followed in the Aſſociate Synod; and contained Sentences,

materially ſuſpending all Miniſters and Elders who would not own a Subordination unto that Synod.

Then Mr. *Ralph Erſkine* made a Speech to this Effect:

"I take all this Company to witneſs, that this "Paper contains many Miſrepreſentations of Mat- "ters of Fact: And I deſire a Copy of it may be "given me, to make it appear: And I deſire that "none here preſent may ſuffer themſelves to be "impoſed upon by it; but wait, till, by Matters "of Fact coming abroad in a true Light, you get "clearer Information."

Then Mr. *Johnſton* having obſerved, that ſeveral Expreſſions in Mr. *Moncrieff*'s Prayer related unto the future Conſtitution of the Preſbytery, aſked the Moderator for Information, Whether the Preſbytery was conſtitute, or not? He was anſwered, It was not.

After that they had thus declared extrajudicially, by the reading of that Narrative, and their Speeches thereupon, that they were to conſtitute, ONLY, in Subordination to *that ſeparated Synod*, Mr. *Ralph Erſkine*, Mr. *Johnſton*, and *James Beugo*, aſſerted, That they could not regard any extrajudicial Declarations, in regard that they have a Right to ſit as Members of the Aſſociate Preſbytery of *Dunfermline* and *Perth*, and are unwilling to ſeparate from their Brethren, unleſs they be thruſt out by changing the Conſtitution: And they declared in ſeveral Speeches, it was their Deſire, that the Preſbytery ſhould conſtitute, ONLY, as it was adjourned from *Ceres* to *Perth*; and not upon any new Footing whatſoever.

But, after all they could do, the Moderator declared, over and over again, that he was to conſtitute the Preſbytery ONLY upon that Footing, of owning Subordination to what they called *the Synod*, which met in Mr. *Gib*'s Houſe, the 10th of *April* 1747, Mr. *Ralph Erſkine*, Mr. *Johnſton*, and

James

James Beugo, ſtill adhering to their former Declaration againſt this *new Conſtitution*.

Then the Moderator did conſtitute by Prayer, uſing Expreſſions, by which it appeared, that this Meeting was actually conſtitu- upon a quite new footing; and was not that ſame Presbytery as formerly at laſt Meeting at *Ceres*, but a quite new one, founded on the footing of owning Subordination to the ſeparated Synod, and whoſe very Conſtitution was founded on a Suppoſition of the actual Suſpenſion of all Miniſters and Elders, who would not own that Subordination.

Therefore, immediately after Prayer, Mr. *Johnſton* proteſted,

" That, as he durſt not diſſemble in a Matter of " this Kind, where a Meeting of Miniſters and " Elders were profeſſing to conſtitute in the Name " and Authority of the *glorious Head of the Church*, " *and King over Zion, the Hill of his Holineſs*; and " at the ſame Time, owning Subordination to a " ſchiſmatical Synod, he could not give Place by " Subjection, *no not for an Hour* *: And therefore " he found himſelf under a Neceſſity to proteſt: " Likeas, Hereby he did proteſt againſt this pre- " ſent Meeting of Miniſters and Elders, their thus " conſtituting upon this *new Foundation* of the Faith " of the faultleſsneſs of that pretended Synod's Se- " paration, and owning unto it any Subordina- " tion; Declaring his Willingneſs to ſit with them " as a Member of the Aſſociate Presbytery of *Dun- " fermline* and *Perth*; as the ſame was adjourned " from *Ceres* to *Perth*, to meet this Day; and, as " the ſame was in Subordination to the only true " and proper Aſſociate Synod, which met at *Edin- " burgh April* 7th laſt; and continued their Meet- " ings, for four Days ſucceſſively in *Briſtol* Church: " And, he declared his Oppoſition to that pretend- " ed Synod; And, that his ſitting any further in " this

* *Gal.* ii. 5

" this Meeting of Miniſters and *Elders*, was, in " order to ſhew his Averſion from Separation, and " to endeavour after their Conviction; and was " not to be conſtructed, as any Approbation of " their Separation, nor any kind of homologating " this preſent Conſtitution. And upon this he took " Inſtruments, and gave Inſtrument money to the " Clerk, craving this to be marked in the Minutes " of this Meeting; but this was denied, tho' often " required."

To this *Proteſtation* and *Declaration*, adhered, the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, and *James Beugo* Elder from *Dumfermline*; and each of them gave Inſtrument-money alſo to the Clerk, requiring their Adherence to be marked; but this likewiſe was refuſed, tho' over and over required.

Thereafter it was moved, That according to ordinary Form, the Roll ſhould be made up, and called; that it might be known, who were Members to ſit as Judges, before proceeding to Buſineſs; but this was denied, until what they called the Minutes of *their* Synod ſhould be read.

At the ſame Time, ſome Brethren endeavoured to ſhew, that this Conſtitution was warrantable; others proved the contrary; and that it was evident by this Conſtitution, that ſeveral Miniſters and Elders, were in their View ſuſpended from the Exerciſe of their Office, as Rulers over the Flock of *Chriſt*.

But before the reaſoning upon this was over, the Moderator ordered the Clerk, to read the Minutes of that Synod, they were to profeſs their Subordination unto.

After the reading of them, the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erskine* again renewed his former Warning, deſiring that no Perſon preſent, might have regard to the unfair Repreſentation contained in that Paper, which they called their Synod's Minutes, ſeveral Things in it being unfairly repreſented; but deſired

fired them, to wait a fair Repreſentation of Matters of Fact from the Synod, which is to meet at *Stirling*, *June* 16th enſuing.

Thereafter, the reaſoning upon the Unwarrantableneſs of this new Conſtitution was again renewed; and after long reaſoning, (wherein Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, Mr. *Johnſton*, and *James Beugo*, endeavoured to prove the Unwarrantableneſs of their altering the Conſtitution of Presbytery) The Clerk proceeded to make up the Roll according to the Appointment of what they call their Synod; and the Roll being thus made up, the following Members were excluded, *viz.* Maſters *Ralph Erskine*, and *James Johnſton* Miniſters, and *James Beugo* Ruling Elder from *Dumfermline*, and *James Anderſon* Ruling Elder from the Aſſociate Congregation at *Dundee*.

The Clerk being appointed by the Moderator to call this Roll, called it accordingly; and every individual Miniſter and Elder named in it, anſwered firſt to his own Name; and then it was enquired at them one by one, as their Names were called, *thus*,

" Do you approve of this Conſtitution? Or " not? And it carried unanimouſly by all that were " named, *Approve**." And a Miniſter in reaſoning declared, That according to the Acts of that Synod, agreeable unto which the preſent Conſtitution is founded, We were *materially ſuſpended from the whole Exerciſe of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven for a Time*: And therefore we could not be enrolled.

The

* It deſerves to be noticed, That the *Elder* from *Perth*, who was preſent at this Meeting alſo, was not called, becauſe it was known he would not approve of this Conſtitution; and neither Miniſters nor Elders Names, who did belong to the old Presbytery's Roll, were mentioned in this *new one*, except theſe, that they knew to be for theſe new Courſes.

The reſt of the Miniſters and Elders, in that unlawful Meeting, ſhewed their Satisfaction with this by their Silence; and ſtopping our Names from being enrolled, tho' we deſired it over and over again: *only*, if they would declare, that they were the ſame Presbytery, that they were at their laſt ordinary Meeting at *Ceres*, and were not upon a new footing, profeſſing our great Averſion againſt our being thus ſhut out from Communion with them; which they had actually now done, by declaring, that they were not the ſame Presbytery of *Dunfermline* and *Perth*, as formerly; and alſo, by cancelling our Names out of their new presbyterial Roll.

Therefore, when they would not receive the foreſaid four Members excluded judicially in their View, on account of the above Conſtitution: And when they were to proceed immediately to other Buſineſs, without regard to what we had been pleading for, *viz.* their continuing to be the *ſame* Presbytery as formerly, it was adjourned from *Ceres* to *Perth*.

Then Mr. *Johnſton* read a Proteſtation, as his Teſtimony againſt them.

Thereafter *James Beugo* read a Paper, containing a Declaration of his Adherence to the *whole Teſtimony*, emitted by the Aſſociate Presbytery, for the Doctrine, Diſcipline, Worſhip, and Government of the Church of *Scotland*; and a Proteſtation, as *his* Teſtimony againſt them.

And then Mr. *Ralph Erskine* made a Speech to this Effect.

" I got my Miniſtry from our Lord Jeſus Chriſt " himſelf, according to his own Appointment; " and in an Agreeableneſs to his Word; and " however unworthy I have been of it, and unfit, " and unfaithful in the due Diſcharge of the Du- " ties of it; yet, I dare not deny, that he hath " *many, many* Times, owned me in it; and appen-

" ded

" ded many Seals unto it, from Time to Time:
" And therefore, I dare not lay it down at the
" Feet of any Body of Men on Earth, that may
" presume to rob me of it."

Then he, *viz.* the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, called the Presbytery, by reading the following Paper.

" At *Perth*, *May* 5, 1747. In regard that se-
" veral Brethren of this Presbytery * have *now* in
" an unprecedented Way, shut us out from their
" Communion, and cancelled our Names out of
" their new presbyterial Roll; and have changed
" their former Holding, by subordinating them-
" selves to a disorderly Meeting in Mr. *Gib's*
" House at *Edinburgh*, in a Way of seceding, and
" withdrawing from the Associate Synod, whereof
" they were Members, and wherein they were sit-
" ting, acting, and voting; and in Consequence
" of their *new* schismatical Constitution, are thus
" casting out their Brethren, Ministers and Elders,
" from Communion with them:

" Therefore I, in mine own Name, and in the
" Name of all that shall adhere to me, *do* hereby
" *protest* and *declare*, That those Brethren, who
" have taken this irregular Course, cannot law-
" fully *retain* the Power and Authority of the
" Associate Presbytery of *Dunfermline* and *Perth*;
" and that their Constitution is unlawful, and their
" Proceedings void and null: But, that this pres-
" byterial Power *remains* only in the Hands of

" these

* Viz The Rev. Masters *Alexander Moncrieff*, at *Abernethy*; *James Thomson*, at *Burntisland*; *Thomas Mair*, at *Orwel*; *George Brown*, at *Perth*; *William Campbell*, at *Ceres*; and *John Erskine*, at *Lessly*; who were present at that Time; and most Part of their Elders: The Rev. Mr. *Andrew Arrot*, Minister of the Gospel at *Dunnichan*; and Mr. *William Mair*, Minister of the Gospel at *Muckhart*; and theirs, and some of the other Ministers, Elders, being absent, or omitted out of their Roll.

" theſe that remain ſubordinate to the Aſſociate " Synod, that met in the Church of *Briſtol*, *April* " 7. 1747. And after they ſat there four Days " ſucceſſively, appointed their next Meeting to " be at *Stirling* the 16th of *June* enſuing. And " therefore I, in mine own Name, and in the " Name of all that *do*, or *ſhall* adhere to me, do " hereby call all the Members (Miniſters and El- " ders) of this Presbytery, to attend the regular Con- " ſtitution of this Presbytery of *Dunfermline* and " *Perth*, to meet in Miſtriſs *Davidſon*'s, Relict to " the late Baillie *Davidſon*, againſt Seven o'Clock " this Evening, in Subordination to the ſaid law- " ful orderly Synod, and all that have Cauſes " depending before the Presbytery, are hereby " warned to attend with their ſeveral Cauſes, that " they may avoid the Snare of being involved in the " Guilt and Danger of a ſinful Separation."

Immediately upon the reading of this, the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erſkine*, Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Dunfermline*; and Mr. *James Johnſton*, Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Dundee*; *James Beugo*, Ruling Elder from *Dunfermline*; and *James Anderſon* Ruling Elder from *Dundee*; removed from the foreſaid unlawful Meeting. * * * * * And * * * * * * * * *

The Aſſociate Presbytery of *Dunfermline* and *Perth*, met according to the foreſaid Warning, at *Perth* in Miſtriſs *Davidſon*'s Houſe; and being conſtitute by the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erſkine* Moderator *pro tempore*, were preſent with the Moderator, Mr. *James Johnſton* Miniſter of the Goſpel at *Dundee*, *James Beugo*, Elder from *Dunfermline*, and *James Anderſon* Elder from *Dundee*. *James Anderſon* deſired his Name might not be enrolled in the preſbyterial Roll, until he conſidered the Matter further; but was willing to join in Prayer with this Presbytery, and not with the foreſaid Meeting, which he had declared, while he was in it, to be conſtitute upon an unwarrantable footing, contrary

to

to Scripture, and our Standards of Diſcipline and Government which are agreeable thereto.

A Motion was made, That, conſidering the preſent Diſpenſation of Providence, whereby our Number is ſo reduced, the Presbytery ſhould ſpend ſome Time in Prayer, before proceeding to any Buſineſs, in order to ſeek of the Lord a right Way for themſelves and their little Ones; and that he might own us, in keeping ſtill to the comely Order of his Houſe, as formerly; and in carrying on the Teſtimony which we adopted, as an Aſſociate Presbytery: This Motion was agreed to.

Extracted ——

JA. JOHNSTON, *Pr. Cls.*

We would deſire to judge charitably of our Brethren, and put the beſt Meaning upon their Actings, that poſſibly we can, without Prejudice to Truth, and taking to ourſelves Guilt, where we are conſcious of no Crime; but as we deſire not to impute unto them any Malice, ſo we ought not to hate them in our Heart, by covering their continuing Infirmity, even at the Expence of our own Innocency: For, granting all they have done to us raſhly, in ſuſpending us from the whole Exerciſe of our Office and Miniſtry, that it was done by them in Sincerity; yet, their Sincerity in that Act, was ſtretched beyond Verity in Matter of Fact.

As this is Ground of Grief to us, and we have uſed all the habile Methods we could for their Conviction; *And have piped unto them, tho' they have not danced, yea, have mourned unto them, and they have not lamented*; by denying us miniſterial Communion firſt, and now at laſt, even a friendly Conference with Prayer, which we deſired only, if poſſibly it might have been bleſſed, for procuring Peace and mutual Concord: We have now no Way of clearing ourſelves of the falſe Charge of Apoſtacy, and quitting and giving up with the Whole

of our Teſtimony ; Crimes indeed, we are not conſcious of, nor chargeable with ; we have no other Means now left us, but to let the World judge, Whether we were well dealt with or not.

We cannot now convince them in their Company, nor defend our own good Name, but by publiſhing our Sentiments, and ſhewing the Grounds upon which they have refuſed us their Society ; ſo that we reckoned it both proper and neceſſary to vindicate ourſelves, and inform others by the foregoing Narrative.

And as the reaſoning on the Unwarrantableneſs of that *new* Conſtitution, may perhaps appear ſomewhat new and ſtrange, as well as the ſudden Change of the Conſtitution: It may not be altogether improper, to ſhew in general, the Sum and Strength of what was argued on either Side of the Debate ; which continued for ſome Hours together without any Intermiſſion, except the reading of the Papers abovementioned.

It was pled, for the Warrantableneſs of the new Conſtitution of this new Presbytery, in Subordination to their new Synod, to this Effect, That they who were not owning a Subordination thereto, and oppoſing this new Conſtitution, were quitting and materially giving up with the Whole of our Teſtimony.

To this it was replied to this Purpoſe,

That this was only a meer Aſſertion and no Proof : for, if the Condemnation of a religious Clauſe in three Burgeſs Oaths, be the whole Confeſſion of Faith among Chriſtians now, and the whole of their Teſtimony, What did they confeſs, and what Teſtimony had we, of a long Time before ? Or, where was the Whole of our Teſtimony then ? When we had only our Bibles, and our *Confeſſion* of Faith, the judicial Act, and Teſtimony, and the like, before that Clauſe was ever quarrelled and condemned ?

It

It was argued by one, who diſapproved of this new Conſtitution, to this Effect: That though it was confidently affirmed, in theſe Minutes of that Synod, read in our Hearing many Times, that himſelf, and all that were oppoſing it, have materially given up with the whole of the Teſtimony: He was ready to prove on the contrary, that all theſe who were on that Side of the Controverſy, have by their Separation materially renounced, and given up with the whole of Preſbytery as well as the Teſtimony, and have thereby practically embraced and adopted a groſs Error of *Popery*: And therefore, added he, ſeeing they have, like *Peter*, *Gal.* 2. 12. withdrawn and ſeparated themſelves, I find it to be my Duty, to withſtand them to their Face becauſe they are to be blamed: For though I neither voted on one Side or other in the Synod, when that Act was paſſed, upon which this Separation was dated; I find that Act to be moſt agreeable to Scripture, and alſo to our Standards.

After this, he advanced his Reaſons, for which he had charged that Principle of *Popery*, upon which the Separation was founded; arguing both from the Command of Chriſt, and the Commendation of the primitive Chriſtians, for ſearching the Scriptures to ſee whether theſe Things taught, were ſo; and from the Apoſtle's ſaying, *I ſpeak as unto wiſe Men, judge ye what I ſay*: Proving alſo from our Standards, that a tranſmitting this Sentence to be ſearched of all Men, and compared by Scripture, before they make it a Term of Communion; and much more ſo, is a tranſmitting it to Preſbyteries and Kirk-Seſſions to conſider, and compare it by the Word of God, agreeable to, and required by Barrier Acts of Reforming Aſſemblies 1639, and 1641. and even the very Practice which appears to be pointed out to us by our *Confeſſion of Faith, Chap.* 31. *Sect.* 4. where we profeſs it as our avowed Principle, that " All Synods

" and

" and Councils ſince the Apoſtles Times may err, " therefore, they are not to be made the Rule of " Faith or Practice, but to be uſed as an Help in " both, &c.

A Rev. Father thought it proper to refute theſe Reaſons advanced againſt their raſh Reſolutions, by ruining that Brother's Reputation at once, while he tare his Character in Pieces, telling the Company, which conſiſted of ſome Hundreds, That for him to be clear in his own Mind in the Synod, and yet not to vote, though he ſaw that Sentence to be agreeable to Scripture, and to our Standards; this deſerved a Character not to be named.

After he had expreſſed his Sorrow and Surprize at ſuch a Perſon of ſo bad Principles and diſingenuous Practices; and after making a long Speech to this Purpoſe, that Brother found himſelf laid under a Neceſſity to vindicate his own Character, when ſuch a Calumny was charged on it, and to maintain his good Name by the Commandment of God, when ſo openly and ſo odiouſly condemned, as a Thing that ought not to be named.

Therefore, as the only Fault in his Character, which his Rev. Father had named, was, for not voting in the Synod, about that Sentence upon which the Separation was ſtated, though he found it to be lawful, and agreeable to Scripture, and our Standards: He gave the Reaſons of his Conduct in that Matter, apparently to the Satisfaction of all preſent, agreeable to Scripture, 1 *Cor.* x. 23. *All Things are lawful for me, but all Things are not expedient: All Things are lawful for me, but all Things edify not.*

But as there had been ſomething blamed in his Character, when it was ſaid openly, and that with great Signs of Grief, Sorrow, and Surprize at it; he could not maintain his miniſterial Character, nor prevent the Injury he had Ground to fear might follow upon this Calumny, if he ſhould have covered

covered the Infirmity, even of his worthy and dear Father, at the Expence of his own Innocency, and lying under the Loſs of his good Name.

Therefore, as ſuch a nameleſs Calumny had been caſt upon him, he charged his Rev. Father, to follow out his Calumny by proving it fully, and to ſpeak out that in his Character, which ought not to be named; or elſe to fall from it immediately: For in that himſelf was willing to hear, and ſubmit his Character to the Conſideration of the Preſbytery.

That Rev. Father being thus charged to prove, or elſe to paſs from his Calumny immediately; openly declared his Satisfaction with that Brother's Character, and paſſed from proving any Slander againſt him. And upon this, that Brother teſtified his Reconciliation with him immediately.

And as the ſame Rev. Father had endeavoured in his Speech foreſaid, alſo to prove the Unwarrantableneſs of that Sentence of Synod upon which the Separation was ſtated, and had from *Acts* xv. 23. alledged that after a Sentence is paſt in a ſuperior Council or Synod, that Act is not to be judged by an inferior Court concerned in it, before its Practice is enjoined: For that this is contrary to Preſbyterian Principles, and deſtructive of all Order whatſoever:

The foreſaid Brother replied thereto in Words to this Effect, That it made nothing to the Purpoſe for his Rev. Father to draw an Argument from *Acts* 15. 23. to prove that People *now* are not to judge of the Sentences of Synods and Councils which concern them, before they make ſuch Sentences the ſtanding Rules of their Faith and Practice. For according to our Standards of Preſbyterian Doctrine, *Confeſſion of Faith, Chap.* 31. *Sect.* 4. we believe that "All Synods and Councils ſince "the Apoſtles Times, whether general or particu-"lar, may *err*, and *many* have *erred*, and therefore "their

" their Determinations are not to be made a *Rule* " of *Faith* or Practice," as the Decrees of that Synod which by the infallible Conduct of the Holy Ghoſt was unerrable. And if the Decrees of Councils and Synods *now* are ſo very perfect, that People are bound to obey them, *merely* becauſe they are paſt, and made by Miniſters and others ſitting in a ſuperior Court, before that People who are concerned in them, have the Privilege to *judge*, and *compare* them by the Word of God: Why is not this very Sentence received alſo, upon which the Separation was ſtated? What Way can ſuch Contradictions in Principle and Practice be reconciled? As to plead that the Decrees of a ſuperior Court are not to be compared with the Word of Truth, and judged by an inferior Court, or even by a private Perſon concerned, before their Practice be enjoined? And yet to ſeparate for a ſuperior Court's paſſing a Sentence? But beſides this Inconſiſtency, to what Purpoſe is it to plead, that becauſe the Decrees of the Synod of *Jeruſalem* had been enjoined preſently, therefore the Decree of our laſt Year's Synod *ought alſo* to be enjoined, and its Practice preſſed preſently: When we own this in our *Confeſſion*, that they were guided *infallibly*; and we have ſad Experience that our Synod has proved fallible, and that frequently? To what Purpoſe is it to plead, that becauſe the Apoſtles delivered them the Decrees for to keep; therefore the Decree of laſt Year's Synod ſhould be made a Term of Communion, before it was examined by Chriſtians, and particularly, before it ſhould be conſidered by Courts concerned therein, and be compared of them and judged by Scripture? Yea, ſuppoſing the primitive Chriſtians, not to have judged theſe Decrees made at the Synod of *Jeruſalem* by the Scriptures themſelves; which none can prove, ſeeing the Spirit of God had given them a Law already and Teſtimony to try them by;

by; as in the Prophecy of *Iſa.* 66. and 20, 21. beſides others to that Purpoſe. If their Practice therein ſhould be received as our Rule, and preſſed upon us as a perpetual and altogether perfect Pattern; then we muſt receive every Act and Decree which a Synod doth determine, whether we judge it right or wrong; and this would bring us to a mere implicit Faith: Yea, it would make Preſbyterian Principles the very ſame in that of Obedience to Councils and Synods with the Principles of *Papiſts*; and ſo bring us to believe as the Church believes, and pin our Faith to their Sleeves.

This Argument tends only to preſs upon People blind Obedience, and is quite contrary to the Scope of the Spirit of God in the Scripture, and is directly oppoſite to the Deſign of our Standards founded upon the Scripture: For Decrees of Councils, or Acts of Synods, are not to be received as our Rules, until we ſee them ourſelves by Scripture that they are right. They are indeed to be uſed as Helps, ſo that whenever any Sentence or Act of Synod in which we are concerned comes abroad, every particular Perſon concerned, and much more ſo, every Preſbytery, and inferior Court in Chriſt's Church, having a greater Charge about Terms of Communion, ought to try and compare it by the Word of God, the only unerring Rule, and to conſider and judge whether it is conſonant to it or not. For it is a Glory to our Reformed Religion, that it permits its Principles to be tried of every particular Perſon by the Word of God, when any new Act or Decree comes abroad; and therein Preſbytery is agreeable to the Practice of the primitive Chriſtians, whom we find ſo highly commended for this, *Acts* 17. 11. that they daily ſearched the Scriptures whether theſe Things were ſo.

To this it was objected, that an Argument which proved too much, proved nothing at all:

For an Argument drawn from the *Bereans* in that Place, proved nothing to the Purpoſe of tranſmitting the Sentence of laſt Synod to Preſbyteries, and Kirk-Seſſions, to be judged by them, before making it a Term of Communion: For an Argument to be drawn from the *Bereans* ſearching the Scriptures daily to ſee whether theſe Things were ſo, would prove that it ought to be tranſmitted to every particular Perſon: And ſo that this Argument was good for nothing; for this would bring in *Independency*, mere *Anarchy*, and all Manner of Diſorder whatſoever.

In order therefore to confirm People againſt the Danger of this Diſorder, it was argued by a Rev. Father thus,

Is it the Property, ſaid he, of every particular Subject when an Act of Parliament is paſt, to have a Copy of it tranſmitted, to be conſidered and judged, by every Individual concerned, whether it ſhall be a ſtanding Rule or not, before the Practice of it be enjoined? What a Confuſion would this occaſion in a well-ordered Commonwealth to make ſuch a Cuſtom?

To this a Brother replied, in no ſmall Surprize, to this Effect, That he was really ſorry to ſee his Rev. Father forget himſelf ſo far; that he would undertake to prove Preſbyterian Principles, and urge a Chriſtian's Practice, from the Courſe which is commonly taken, in complying with the Deeds of civil Courts or Parliaments.

To this it was anſwered, that it was not to prove, but to illuſtrate.

But this Manner of covering his Infirmity proved very offenſive to that Brother, in Regard, that in the Aim, and Tendency of the Speech, in which that Compariſon of the Conduct of civil Courts was uſed, it appeared plainly to be deſigned on purpoſe to prove his Point; in order to preſs the preſent Practice of People, and their calm Concurrence with

with Church Authority, in obeying the Decrees of Courts, without judging them by the Scriptures, before they received them as their ſtanding Rules. For the plain Scope and Tendency of that Simile, ſeemed rather to prove than illuſtrate what he was pleading for: And therefore, he ought, freely, clearly, and fully to have paſt from that Way of Reaſoning; ſeeing he had thereby confounded civil with ſacred Things, confounded Privileges with Practices, and State Privileges with Scripture Precepts, whereby People of weak Capacities, could not ſhun to be perplexed; and whereby they were in Danger of being perverted unto a Popiſh, and implicit Obedience to Church Authority: This was a Way of arguing which tended to let People continue careleſs about ſearching the Scriptures, and comparing new Acts of Church Authority with the Scriptures, though theſe Acts concern themſelves, if they have no Privilege to judge an Act of Synod by Scripture, to prevent Sin in their Practice. This Way of arguing appeared to be rather an obſcuring than an illuſtrating; and a dazling Peoples Eyes, from diſcerning their Danger of being deceived, by Decrees preſſed upon them by Church Authority; yea, to reaſon in this Strain of confounding civil with ſacred Compliance to Courts, tended to render the ignorant regardleſs and ſecure, about ſearching after Knowledge; and ready to receive any Sentence of a Synod, or ſuperior Court, as a ſtanding Rule, at firſt ſight; without comparing it with Scripture, and judging it thereby to be right.

Therefore this Brother declared, as above, his Diſpleaſure at this Way of arguing, in order to preſs People to a blind Obedience, and proved, that this is purely implicit Faith his Rev. Father was pleading for: And that it is entirely a Popiſh Principle which theſe who contend for theſe new Courſes are now embracing: When they are preſ-

ſing on People, and particularly on himſelf, and others preſent with him, the Practice of a Decree of their new Synod, and enjoining it as a ſtanding Rule, both of their Faith and Practice, and that preſently! Or elſe they muſt be immediately ſuſpended from ſitting in Preſbytery, and conſequently, from the whole Exerciſe of their Office, and Miniſtry! Such Acts of their Synod, laying ſo many Miniſters of Chriſt materially under a Suſpenſion immediately! which Acts he had found framed by them the very firſt Day after their Separation, by an unheard of Haſte! in their Reſolution! and the Vehemency! and Zeal uſed in urging the preſent Execution thereof, upon ſeveral Miniſters and Elders! That this was a juſt Ground of Suſpicion of our Danger; when we are driven, urged, and preſſed with ſuch Poſt-haſte to eſpouſe a Popiſh Principle: That therefore he ſaw from the Strain of ſuch a Way of Reaſoning, that credulous People are really in Hazard of returning into *Popery*, if this Principle prevail: For it paves the Way to it, and is a principal Error of it.

In order therefore to diſcover this Deceit of illuſtrating our Preſbyterian Principles from Subjects Privileges about Acts of Parliaments, and civil Courts in which they are concerned: It is to be noticed, that, though it is not the Privilege of every Subject to have the Copy of every Act of Parliament concerning him tranſmitted to him, before its Practice be enjoined; yet it is his Property and Privilege to have the Knowledge of it ſome Way ſhown to him before it be obeyed. And as it is the Privilege of every individual Perſon, to know ſome Way or other, every Deed and Act of a Court which concerns himſelf: So it will be the Practice of every tender and conſcientious Chriſtian, to compare every Deed of a civil Court concerning his Practice, by the Word of God, before he

he receive it as the Rule of his Practice, and to obey God rather than Men, if it is wrong.

And if it is not his Duty to compare it with the Word of Truth before he obey it, becauſe it was not his Privilege, to have a Copy of it tranſmitted to him, before the Practice of it was enjoined: Why then, is the preſent Swearing of the Religious Clauſe in ſome Burgeſs Oaths refuſed, and condemned?

After this, another Rev. Father obſerved, that the Brother who ſpoke laſt, ſeemed to expreſs a Dread and Fear, that the Brethren were driving People into *Popery:* But, ſaid he, I do not believe that he thinks ſo! he does not ſpeak as he thinks! but ſpeaks one Thing and thinks another!

That Brother finding himſelf thus openly charged with groſs Diſſimulation, replied to this Purpoſe: That he was ſorry to find his Fathers ſo often forgetting themſelves, that when they ſaw evidently the Strength of their Argument fail, they always tried if Slander and Calumny could prevail: And every now and then, they were found endeavouring to enervate his Reaſoning, by ruining his Reputation, and ſtriving to ſubvert the Strength of his Arguments by their tearing his Character, and even proceeding ſo far, as to judge his Heart; a Thing which was truly too high for them to know, or to cenſure.

Therefore he openly declared, that he really, and truly thought as he ſpoke; that they were embracing a Popiſh Principle; by preſſing People to give a blind Obedience to their Decrees, and denying them the Liberty of judging every Sentence themſelves by Scripture, before making it a Rule of Faith or Practice.

That for his own Part, he had always endeavoured in his Reaſoning to argue againſt this Popiſh Principle, and at the ſame Time in Love, and in the Spirit of Meekneſs, he had endeavoured to reſtore

ſuch

ſeth of his Fathers as he found overtaken in this Fault; and could take the whole Company to witneſs, that he had always paid a due Regard and Deference to the good Name and Character of the Perſons pleading in their Miſtake for it; that he had ſtill ſhewed Reſpect, and a charitable Eſteem for his Fathers, even tho' he found them overtaken with Infirmity; But was grieved to obſerve them going quite off the Point of Controverſy, into Raillery and Calumny; *one* alledging he deſerved a Character that ought not to be named; and now another charging him with groſs Diſſimulation, as if he was highly to be blamed!

But as ſuch a ſlandering Way of reaſoning in that Strain, was ſo ſimilar to Satan's accuſing of the Brethren, he hoped, no Perſon of common Prudence would pay any Regard to it.

Therefore paſſing this Calumny, which could not be proved by Men; and returning to the Point, and preſent Subject of Controverſy, that Brother obſerved, That by the Minutes of the *new* Synod read in our Hearing, he found Acts ſuſpending himſelf and many others, both Miniſters and Elders, from all Exerciſe of their Office, as Rulers in the Church of Chriſt!

That, by the reading of theſe raſh and reſolute Sentences, of ſudden Suſpenſion of Miniſters and Elders, he found himſelf actually excluded from the Key of Diſcipline and Government; and conſequently materially, yea, in their View judicially excommunicated; only, becauſe he became not a *Papiſt* in this Particular, to own by an implicit Faith a Subordination to them, who had ſeparated from their Brethren, for making an Act, which had a direct Tendency to ſet People a ſearching the Scripture, in order to prevent Sin in their Practice, and an Act which is agreeable to our Standards; that thereby he found himſelf caſt out from Communion, for no other Reaſon alledged in theſe Miniſters

niſters themſelves, except only, that he durſt not without breaking his Ordination Vows and Engagements, own that Subordination, which they had made an Article of their *new Creed* this Day, by approving judicially in their View, this *new* and unheard of Conſtitution; that therefore he could not ſay, as they ſay, nor believe as they believe, nor pin his Faith to their Sleeve.

And as for my Elder, ſaid he, tho' I have never yet conſulted him on that Subject, nor know his Judgment to this Moment; yet I find he is rendered an unlawful Elder, tho' he condemn the Burgeſs Oath, and approve of the Separation, and find no Fault with theſe who have now conſtitute, purely on the Faith of its being Faultleſs: Now, the only Thing that will render him incapable in that Event, and be the Reaſon of his Rejection, is, becauſe he was choſen ſince that Synod, while I was moderating in Seſſion; whereas, 'tis very evident from that very haſty and reſolute Act of theirs, that the ſame Elder might have been admitted as a Member, if he ſhall appear to be of their Mind, ſuppoſing his Election had only preceeded that Synod.

Upon this, that Elder begged of the Moderator Leave to ſpeak, but was interrupted a little by two or three Miniſters, muttering to one another about him; while one of them appeared willing to know, what might be his Mind, another of them ſpoke audibly in theſe Words, "He was choſen "ſince the Synod;" whereby in ſo few Words he declared, That by their Synod's Sentences of Suſpenſion, all Elders however they may prove to be on their Side, are actually ſuſpended for a Seaſon, if they have been elected in a Seſſion, where one of a different Mind is moderating; and conſequently, that all Miniſters not owning that Subordation; and, even many Elders of their own Opinion perhaps, are actually ſuſpended in their View thro' all

all such Ministers Congregations, even since these sudden Sentences were rashly received as their Rules.

However, the Moderator at Length allowed that Elder to speak his Mind, which he delivered in Words to this Effect,

"I never had the Honour to sit as a Member "in any Presbytery before, tho' I have been wit-"ness to many; and I am really sorry to see the "Conduct of this one; therefore, I do here de-"clare, That tho' I must condemn the religious "Clause of some Burgess-Oaths, in as far as I "have Light from the Scripture about it; yet I "am entirely dissatisfy'd with the Separation that "is so unwarrantably made upon it; for thereby "I find Ministers of Christ, and Elders, contrary "to Scripture, and our Standards of Discipline, "by a rash Sentence of that Synod, immediately "laid under a Suspension; and that before ever "they were called to answer for any Crime they "had committed, and before ever their Cause "was heard and tried, and any proper Means "were used to convince them of any Fault; and "therefore, as the very Constitution of that Synod "stands on a Supposition of these Ministers being "under an actual Suspension; I am not for this "Presbytery's constituting upon this new footing, "of owning that Subordination, nor upon any "other footing, than what they were formerly at "their last Meeting at *Ceres*."

However, notwithstanding of all this he was excluded; and a Question being moved, in order to know the true Meaning of the *new* Synod's Acts; Whether by them they considered all Ministers, not owning that Subordination, as actually suspended in their View, from the Key of Discipline and Government *only*, or from the whole Exercise of their Office, as Ministers of Christ?

A Rev.

A Rev. Father in Anſwer to this Queſtion, and to ſhew the true Senſe and Import of their Sentences of Suſpenſion, declared it in theſe Words, among others, That theſe Miniſters were *materially ſuſpended from the whole Exerciſe of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven for a Time:* And in the reſt of his Speech, he ſhewed unto what Time they were thus ſuſpended, *viz.* until they ſee their preſent Way to be their Sin, and acknowledge this Subordination.

The Moderator, and all the Members of this *new* Meeting of Miniſters and Elders, which they called a Presbytery, all and every one ſhewed their Conſent with this Senſe by their Silence, and ſtopping the Names of the foreſaid four Members from being enrolled in their new Presbytery's Roll; whereby it evidently appeared, that every one of them conſidered the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, Mr. *Johnſton*, and their Elders, *James Beugo* and *James Anderſon*, as being actually under a Sentence of Suſpenſion already, from all the Parts of their Office, as Miniſters and Office-bearers in the Church of Chriſt, tho' no Means had been ever tried hitherto, to convince them of any Crime, except only the reading of ſome Papers in their Hearing, which ſuppoſed them to be under an immediate Suſpenſion at firſt Sight, unleſs they would make it an Article of Faith, and openly profeſs the Separation was ſo ſinleſs, as to change the very Conſtitution of Presbytery on the Belief of it; yea, theſe Papers ſeveral Times repeated this; That a not owning thoſe new Courſes of theirs, and particularly, that a defending the Swearing to maintain the true Religion in ſome Burgeſs Oaths, is a dropping the Whole of our Teſtimony; as if the Whole of our Teſtimony were contracted into the condemning to ſwear to profeſs and allow the true Religion!

Thus, having in their View, judicially declared, that the Guilt of all Miniſters and Elders, who

agree not with them in these new Courses, is so gross, that they consider them as already suspended and actually excommunicated from these Exercises of *the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven* which *Christ* hath given them; and as they were pressing the present Practice of these sudden Sentences of Suspension, and presently putting them in Execution as violently; and as far as it appeared possible to push Things in their present Circumstances and Situation, Mr. *Johnston* having several Times begged his Name might be added to the Roll, upon the same footing of Constitution as formerly, ever since his Ordination; and observing the Names of several Members of the Associate Presbytery of *Dunfermline* and *Perth*, some whereof were present, and omitted, as appeared, on Purpose; therefore he urged again, that his Protestation might be marked, and his Name added to the Roll accordingly, declaring his great Aversion at Separation; and that he was willing to take his Seat with his dear Fathers and Brethren; if, for the Satisfaction of his Conscience concerning his Ordination Vows, they would only declare, That they were that same Presbytery, to which they themselves had bound him, about a Year ago to own a due Subordination in the Lord; but tho' the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, and *James Beugo* his Elder, backed him, in this Declaration and Desire; no Reply was made thereto.

And as Mr. *Johnston* in Testimony of his utter Abhorrence at Separation and Division, was observed in his *seeking Peace and pursuing it*, when it was plainly flying from him, to the Observation of all, as much as possibly he could without breaking his Ordination Vow about Subordination; and at the same Time, keep a pure Conscience in preventing the Sin of this *Popish* Principle, to profess an implicit Faith of their Separation's being Faultless; and as he was observed to urge his Request, so frequently

quently and fervently; he was over and over again mocked by a Rev. Father, who from the very Beginning of the Debate, appeared fond for Mr. *Johnſton* ſeparating himſelf forwardly as he, and the reſt of them had done.

Therefore, he was now and then in a taunting *Tone!* telling Mr. *Johnſton*, when plainly directing his Speech to him, and not the Moderator, but ſtaring him broad in the Face, and always ſpeaking in the third Perſon, *thus*,

I wonder that Mr. *Johnſton* would ſit with ſuch Miniſters as, he ſays, are Members of a pretended Synod, and the like!

As this was again and again repeated in a jeſting Manner, and made Uſe of as a Matter of Mockery, which diſcovered an entire Indifferency about his Brother's Concern for Peace, when he was purſuing it with ſuch Affection and Vehemency; Mr. *Johnſton*, once and again at leaſt, with Sorrow, replied to this Effect, That he was really ſorry to find ſome ſo fond of Separation, as to make a Jeſt and Mock of a Matter of ſuch Moment, as the renting of Union among Miniſters of Chriſt was! As the marring the Communion of Saints was, which muſt be its native Conſequence! That for one to make a *Taunt* at a Thing, which manifeſtly had an immediate and direct Tendency to *tear* the Flock of Chriſt, as well as Miniſters, and mar the Edification of ſo many, appeared to him to be ſo very terrible and myſterious to think on, that he really was at a Loſs, and wanted Words to expreſs his Wonder! That as for himſelf, he thought this Matter of Miniſters ſeparating themſelves, was ſo ſtumbling to the graceleſs! and ſo ſhaking, ſo ſplitting, ſo ſinking, and ſo ſaddening to the Hearts of the Gracious! That tho' he had found ſeveral Miniſters and Elders in this Meeting, like *Peter*, *Gal.* ii. 12. withdrawing and ſeparating themſelves, and had therefore judged it his Duty to withſtand them

them openly to the Face, because they were to be blamed; and tho' it was evident, they were striving all they could to divest him of all his Privileges, as a Pastor over the Flock of Christ, contrary to the Word of God, and to their own professed Standards; yet, the Unity of Ministers and Saints among themselves, was a Thing he wanted to be so tender of; that as he had always studied to speak *in the Spirit of Meekness*, in the whole Course of his reasoning on this Controversy, and had always shewed his great Aversion at Separation; so he desired earnestly still to entreat them, as he longed after them all in *the Bowels of Jesus Christ*, to return to their Duty; and *only* declare, that they were willing to be called the *same* Presbytery, that they were at their last Meeting at *Ceres*, to which Presbytery he was bound by them at his Ordination, to own a due Subordination; and that as we ought to *put on Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another*; so he desired them *only* to sit down *as* they were at their last Meeting, and upon no new footing; and he was ready to receive them in Love, ready to sit with them, as he had done formerly, and was still bound to do by his Engagements he came under at his Ordination; and, that he earnestly entreated them, to consider the dismal Consequences which have already followed upon the Breach made at last Synod; and the dreadful Consequences which must in all human Appearance still follow upon this unprecedented and unscriptural Suspension, they have pretended to pass in their *new* Synod, which they are now putting in Execution as violently and unreasonably, as these their Acts of Suspension were made unwarrantably and unseasonably; in regard that this breaking up of ministerial Communion has a native and direct Tendency to tear, rent, and divide every particular Congregation, owning

owning the Teſtimony, unleſs every individual in one Congregation ſhall be ſo far left as to receive this moſt dangerous Error of *Popery*, upon which their Separation is founded; namely, to receive by an implicit Faith, and make every new Act a Term of Communion at firſt ſight, without aſſerting it as their Privilege to try it firſt themſelves, and conſider its Conſonancy with Scripture, before they receive it as a Rule of their Faith and Practice; for, who can imagine that every particular Perſon in any one of theſe Miniſters own Congregations, will prove ſo popiſh, as to profeſs implicitely to believe always as his Miniſter believes, and receive this and every other new Opinion and Principle his Miniſter receives; and thus pin every one his Faith to their Synod's Sleeve?

Immediately upon this Speech alſo, the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, and *James Bengo*, one by one declared, That they were of the ſame Mind, and backed him again in this Declaration and Deſire.

But after theſe and other Things to this Effect, had been tried in vain for Union and Healing, and all Methods were uſed for Peace, to no Purpoſe, and all Endeavours to prevent a Rupture were tried, which could be complied with in a Conſiſtency with the Word of Truth; and when nothing leſs would maintain Peace, than that we ſhould judicially confeſs, that this Conſtitution was Right, upon the new Footing formerly mentioned, which we found to be faulty: In one Word, when they were to proceed to other Buſineſs immediately, and quite diſown us;

Then Mr. *Johnſton* read his Proteſtation,

'AT *Perth*, *May* 5, 1747. Which Day, I '*James Johnſton*, Miniſter of the Goſpel at '*Dundee*, being now ejected from miniſterial Com-'munion, *and declared to be ſuſpended from the whole* '*Exerciſe of the Kingdom of Heaven for this Time*;

'being

' being caſt out by my Brethren, who ſay; *Let the*
' *Lord be glorified*, for no Crime complained of,
' and proven againſt me, but only for my en-
' deavouring to preſerve the due Order in the
' Houſe of God, namely, my Subordination unto
' the only, true, and proper Aſſociate Synod, in
' Oppoſition to a pretended one, which ſome Mi-
' niſters and Elders alledge they have conſtitute;
' deſiring, according to the Spirit of God's Direc-
' tion, to ſanctify the Lord God in my Heart, and
' be ready to give an Anſwer to every one preſent,
' whoſe Deſires may be demanding me, to ſhew
' from the Word of God, a Reaſon of the Hope
' that is in me, with *Meekneſs and Fear*, for which
' Hope I am ſuffering this miniſterial Excommu-
' nication.

I do therefore find it to be my Duty, to teſtify
' againſt this Meeting of Miniſters and Elders, who
' have, like *Peter*, *Gal.* ii 12. *Withdrawn and ſe-*
' *parated themſelves*, and therefore are to be with-
' ſtood to their Faces, becauſe they are to be blam-
' ed: For which Cauſe, I do hereby *declare*, that
' their owning Subordination to that pretended Sy-
' nod, is an inverting the comely and due Order,
' which Chriſt hath ſettled in his Houſe as King
' in *Zion*, *the Hill of his Holineſs*; in Regard that
' theſe Miniſters and Elders, did ſeparate and
' withdraw themſelves from the *only* proper Aſſo-
' ciate Synod, for and upon their making the fol-
' lowing Act, Namely,

" That the Deciſion anent the religious Clauſe
" in ſome Burgeſs-Oaths, paſſed by this Synod in
" *April* 1746. ſhall not *now* or afterward, be made
" a Term of miniſterial and Chriſtian Commu-
" nion, ay and until the making of the ſame to
" be ſo, ſhall be referred by Way of Overture
" unto Presbyteries and Kirk-ſeſſions, in order to
" their giving their Judgment thereanent, that ſo
" there may in the mean Time, be a friendly
" dealing

" dealing among the Members of this Synod with
" one another, in a Way of Conference and Prayer,
" in order to their coming, through the Lord's
" Pity, to ſee *Eye to Eye* in the Matter of the ſaid
" religious Clauſe.

' Which Act of Synod is moſt agreeable to Scrip-
' ture, and our profeſſed Principle of Presbyterian
' Church Government; for, ſuppoſing that Clauſe
' to be ſinful, as the Sentence of Synod condemn-
' ing it, is a new Decree, never determined by any
' Court in Chriſt's Church heretofore; ſeeing ac-
' cording to our *Confeſſion of Faith, Chap.* 31. *Sect.*
" 4. All Synods, and Councils ſince the Apoſtles
" Time may err, and many have erred, they are
" not to be made the Rule of Faith or Practice,
" but to be uſed as an *Help* in both.' Therefore,
' before making that Sentence of Synod a Rule of
' Faith and Practice, we ought to examine, whe-
' ther that Decree and Determination be *Conſonant*
' *to the Word of God*, or not, by the 3d Article of
' the ſame Chapter: Moreover, as this was an
' Act which concerned the whole diffuſive Body
' of the Church of Chriſt, under the Synod's In-
' ſpection; their tranſmitting it to be tried by the
' Word of God, eſpecially to Presbyteries and
' Kirk-ſeſſions, who are chiefly therein concerned,
' was required by Barrier Acts of reforming Aſſem-
' blies 1639 and 1641; yea, the Synod by this
' very Sentence, for which the Separation was ſta-
' ted, acted according to the Commandment of
' Chriſt, and the Spirit of God's Commendation of
' Chriſtians; for our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, *John* v. 39.
' ſays, *Search the Scriptures*; and the Spirit of God
' commends the Bereans, *Acts* xvii. 11. that theſe
' were more noble than thoſe in *Theſſalonica*, in
' that they received the Word with all Readineſs
' of Mind, and ſearched the Scriptures daily, whe-
' ther thoſe Things were ſo; ſo that the Synod
' thereby declared their Deſire, that People under

' their

'their Inſpection, ſhould be built upon the Foun-
'dation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, that their
'Faith might not ſtand in the Wiſdom of Men;
'thereby, they did ſhew and declare, that they
'had not Dominion over their Faith; but gave
'them Occaſion to exerciſe that Liberty, allowed
'them by Chriſt, and reſtrained, and denied unto
'them by *Antichriſt*, namely, to ſearch the Scrip-
'tures themſelves, and examine every Sentence
'which concerns them, with a private Judgment
'of Diſcretion; it being the Glory of our refor-
'med Religion, to permit its Principles and Doc-
'trines to be examined and tried of all Men, by
'the Rule of God's Word; and to receive every
'Decree and Determination *only*, that is conſo-
'nant to this Word of God, and which they find
'to be ſo, before they make it their ſtanding Law
'and Rule of their Faith and Practice; ſo that
'the Brethren, Miniſters and Elders who have ſin-
'fully ſeparated, and withdrawn themſelves from
'the true Aſſociate Synod, for paſſing the foreſaid
'Sentence, have thereby *practically* embraced that
'groſs *popiſh Error*, of requiring of People im-
'plicit Faith; and reſtraining them from ſearch-
'ing the Scriptures, when once a Decree or Sen-
'tence of Synod is paſt, before making it a Rule
'of Faith and Practice, in as much as they did
'ſeparate; becauſe the Act of Synod, condemning
'the religious Clauſe of ſome Burgeſs Oaths, was
'not made a Term of miniſterial and Chriſtian
'Communion, juſt now — until People who had
'Concern therein had Light to ſee it conſonant to
'the Lord's Word; for which Reaſons their Separa-
'tion is directly contrary to our Standards, and the
'Word of God, on which they are founded;
'thereby they *practically* declare, they deſire blind
'Obedience to their Decrees, before ſuch as
'obey do ſufficiently diſcern them to be agreeable
'to divine Revelation, or can even obtain a com-

'petency

'petency of Time, and Means of Light, and ne-
'ceſſary Information. Thereby they would preſs
'People preſently to profeſs themſelves to be of
'their Party, and juſtify their Conduct, by clea-
'ving to them, and caſting off Communion with
'others, as unworthy of their Charity, becauſe
'they are not come to their Light, and Perſpicuity;
'and that before People who approve not of
'theſe Practices, perceive, and ſee Things ſuffi-
'ciently themſelves from Scripture; thereby, ſuch
'as have thus ſeparated, ſhew that they will give
'no Allowance of Peoples private Judgment of
'Diſcretion, if they declare themſelves to be diſ-
'poſed to favour both Parties, till they examine
'Things further; for, unleſs that People do de-
'clare, that they are diſpoſed to ly open to light
'their Way; and declare they are doubting al-
'ready of the other Way, by theſe Courſes they
'are cut off from Chriſtian Communion immedi-
'ately, tho' they profeſs the ſame Teſtimony, and
'appear to make as fair Searches for Truth, as
'themſelves; and in whom in the Judgment of
'Charity, we may diſcern as much Tenderneſs
'and Fear of Sin as in others.

'Now, as there is a Concatenation of Errors,
'whereby one links and draws another after it;
'ſo this unwarrantable Separation upon this *popiſh*
'*Principle*, draws and drives its Abettors into this
'new Error and Abſurdity; namely, to make the
'owning of their Separation to be lawful, an Ar-
'ticle of their Faith, and a new Creed, and a
'*Shibboleth*, upon which as great Streſs is laid,
'as upon the *ſurer Word of Prophecy*; and in or-
'der that People may embrace theſe new Opini-
'ons in a Surprize, it leads into this Error which
'our Lord reproved in the *Phariſees*, *Luke* xvi. 15.
'ye are they which juſtify yourſelves before Men,
'when ſtrong Words profeſſing Purity, and high
'Pretences of Zeal for Reformation are uſed, to

'juſtify this Separation, and ſtrong Aſſertions are 'made, that ſuch as come not over to their ſide, 'are materially quitting and giving up with the 'whole of the Teſtimony: That they are willing-'ly ignorant; blinding themſelves; ſhutting their 'Eyes againſt Sun-Beams, through Pride, Preju-'dice, and worldly Policy, and the like.

'But if we may know *Trees* by their *Fruits*, 'whether they be good or bad, which is the Rule 'our Lord hath left to try Opinions by, *Matth.* 7. '20. The Fruit and Effect which this violent 'ruſhing, in this Matter of miniſterial Excommu-'nication, and ſecluding Members from ſitting in 'Seſſions, hath already produced, is a deplorable 'devouring of our Time, and diverting of our 'Minds from the more material Exerciſes of Re-'ligion, diſcompoſing us from ſedate Self-exami-'nation, Meditation, and Prayer: And inſtead of 'ſtrengthning one another's Hands, or warming 'one another's Hearts by Chriſtian Converſation, 'lays us under a Neceſſity to contradict one ano-'ther, and thus procures mutual Irritation.

'And as this making new Terms of Commu-'nion leads its Lovers unto many Abſurdities in 'Principle, ſo doth it drive them unto this dan-'gerous Practice, of diſgracing Miniſters of Chriſt 'as much as they can, to defame them, and blaſt 'their Reputation, as if they were mere Apoſtates, 'and giving up with the whole of our Teſtimony, 'which is a direct Breach of our Covenant En-'gagement, to ſtrengthen one another's Hands, 'and is a crafty Device to draw Men from the 'Truth.

'And whereas all Haſte and Speed is violently 'preſſed upon the Conſciences of Miniſters and 'private Chriſtians, to declare themſelves to be 'for theſe their new Opinions openly, and to 'make an open Profeſſion of ſuch haſty Reſolu-'tions, whereby a due and deliberate Examination

'is

'is prevented: I ſhall cite a Paſſage from *Flavel's* 'Diſcourſe upon mental Errors, Edin. Edit. Pag. '434. Suſpect that Opinion (as juſtly you may) 'ſays he, for erroneous, that is too importunate, 'and preſſing upon you, and will not allow you 'due Time of Conſideration, and Means of In-'formation. That which is a Truth To-day, will 'be a Truth To-morrow; but that which looks 'like a Truth To-day, may be detected, and look 'like itſelf, an odious Error To-morrow. And 'this is the Reaſon of that Poſt-haſte, Satan, and 'his Factors make to gain our preſent Conſent, 'leſt a ſpeedy Detection fruſtrate——and ſpoil the 'Deſign.'——Says he, on the ſame Page, 'By 'entertaining *ſtrange Perſons*, Men ſometimes en-'tertain *Angels* unawares; but by entertaining of '*ſtrange Doctrines*, many have entertained *Devils* 'unawares. It is not ſafe, ſays he, to open the 'Door of the Soul, to let in Strangers in the 'Night; let them wait, till a clear Day-light of 'Information, ſhew you what they are.' Thus far he.

'For all which Reaſons, and others that might 'be named, I proteſt that this Meeting of Mini-'ſters and Elders, in this unlawful Manner, upon 'a quite new Footing, from what they were for-'merly, are to be blamed for all the bad Conſe-'quences of this my Suſpenſion from miniſterial 'Communion with them, and for my Ejection 'from ſitting in Preſbytery with them; in Regard 'that I am thus far excommunicated, only for 'endeavouring to obſerve the due Order in the 'Houſe of God, and my Subordination to the 'only true and proper Aſſociate Synod, in Oppo-'ſition to the pretended one, according to my 'Ordination Vows, and Engagements, and becauſe 'I am endeavouring to act in an Agreeableneſs to 'our Standards, and the Scriptures on which they 'are founded.

'And I hereby proteſt, that as this Meeting is 'conſtitute upon another Footing than formerly; 'and by their own Profeſſion, is not the ſame as 'it was: That therefore it is not to be accounted 'the lawful Aſſociate Preſbytery of *Dunfermline* 'and *Perth:* But it ſhall be lawful for me to join in 'Preſbytery with all my Rev. Fathers, and Bre-'thren, who are willing, to continue as formerly, 'to conſtitute with me on the ſame Footing as 'they were at their laſt ordinary Meeting at *Ceres*, 'and formerly ever ſince my Ordination.'

JA. JOHNSTON.

And then *James Beugo* read his Proteſtation,

Unto the Rev. the Miniſters and Elders, preſently conveened at Perth, May 5. 1747.

The REPRESENTATION, DECLARATION, *and* TESTIMONY *of* JAMES BEUGO *Elder, commiſſionate to attend the Synod, and ſubſequent Presbyteries.*

'THAT when the Lord cleared up my Way, 'to make a Seceſſion from the preſent Ju-'dicatories of the eſtabliſhed Church, on account 'of her Apoſtacies and Backſlidings from our re-'ceived Standards, and covenanted Principles; I 'did not caſt off the Church of *Scotland*, in her 'Conſtitution, while the Words and Reaſon of the 'Law conſtituting her are ſo expreſſed, as to be a 'ſettling the true Religion according to the Word 'of God, and as of a long Time profeſſed with-'in this Realm; Preſbyterial Church Government 'agreeable thereto, and moſt conducive to the Ad-'vancement of true Piety and Godlineſs; and the '*Confeſſion of Faith*, as containing the Sum and 'Subſtance of the Doctrines of the Reformed 'Churches;

'Churches; which *Confeſſion of Faith*, the Act of 'Aſſembly 1647. approving thereof, declares to 'be the *chiefeſt Part* of the covenanted Uniformi-'ty: This being the Caſe, I dare not caſt off the '*Conſtitution*, while in the mean Time I deſire to 'be affected with, and mourn over the *Omiſſions*, 'and ſinful Neglects of this Revolution Period: 'And, as I do ſo, I hereby declare my conſtant 'Adherence, through Grace, unto a Teſtimony 'lifted up by the Aſſociate Preſbytery, againſt the 'Faults and Failings of this, as well as of the 'other Periods mentioned therein. I would in-'cline to be, as *Iſrael* when the ſecond Temple 'was built, there was a Proclamation by *Cyrus*, 'that the God of Heaven commanded him to 'build him an Houſe at *Jeruſalem*, 2 *Chron.* 36. '22, 23. *Ezra* 1. 2, 3. And we ſee the Builders 'made uſe of this Decree (in *Darius* his Time) 'for furthering this great Work, *Ezra* 5. 13. Not-'withſtanding that it was done by the Command-'ment of the God of Heaven, yet there ſeem'd 'to be a Want in it, as there was no mention in 'that Decree, of doing it according to the Pat-'tern God gave to *Solomon*, of the firſt Temple: 'There, we ſee the different Diſpoſitions that took 'place amongſt the old and young Men, mourn-'ing and rejoicing; yet this ſecond Houſe he ho-'noured with his Preſence therein: So, I deſire to 'mourn, that although the true Religion and 'Preſbyterial Church Government be ſettled *ac-'cording* and *agreeable* to the Word of God, and 'the *Confeſſion of Faith*; which (according to the 'Aſſembly 1647) is the chief Part of our cove-'nanted Uniformity, be ratified and received; the 'Nation and Church did not formally declare the 'binding Obligation of our Covenants; and al-'though I dare not caſt off the Conſtitution, while 'the true Religion, *&c.* are ſettled as above; yet 'I am, and hereby declare myſelf to be, of the

'ſame

‘ ſame Judgment, with Relation to a Seceſſion
‘ from the Judicatories of the preſent eſtabliſhed
‘ Church, in their backſliding Condition, and re-
‘ fuſing to return to lift up a Teſtimony for our
‘ covenanted Reformation: Thus, I hold the ſame
‘ Principles I was holding; and That all the Mem-
‘ bers of the Aſſociation are engaged to, laid down
‘ in the judicial *Act and Teſtimony*.

‘ Now, although I cannot have room here,
‘ fully to declare my Principles, relating to an
‘ Act of Synod, in *April* 1746. condemning the
‘ Religious Clauſe of ſome Burgeſs Oaths; and
‘ as I had, and ſtill have, otherwiſe, a great Re-
‘ gard for the Rev. Members, on the ſide of the
‘ Synod's Act, and am convinced, that our Appear-
‘ ances on this ſide teſtify the ſame, while we have
‘ been contending, that we might not be thruſt out
‘ from amongſt them; yet I could not go into
‘ the above Act of Synod, it being in my private
‘ Judgment, a condemning what God of a long
‘ Time has wrought for us: For, as a leaving any
‘ Part of the Teſtimony behind is dangerous, as
‘ was the Caſe with *Moſes*, in not circumciſing his
‘ Son, for which the Lord would have killed him;
‘ ſo, on the other Hand, how awful is it to exceed
‘ with a Teſtimony? The ſame *Moſes* his Carcaſe
‘ actually fell in the Wilderneſs, and he was not
‘ allowed to enter the promiſed Land, for his ex-
‘ ceeding the Boundaries of the divine Preſcripti-
‘ on, in his Zeal againſt the Rebellion of *Iſrael*,
‘ ſaying, *Hear now, ye Rebels, ſhall I bring Water*
‘ *out of the Rock?* Thus he ſpake Words unadvi-
‘ ſedly with his Lips. While this is the Caſe with us,
‘ the above Act of Synod being made a Term of Com-
‘ munion by ſome of our Brethren, our Management
‘ in the two preceeding Synods, was only to ward
‘ off the Blow of the Sword of Diſcipline, that
‘ was drawn upon us, until the Queſtion anent its
‘ being ſo by the Synod, ſhould be remitted to

‘ Preſby-

'Preſbyteries, &c. for their Judgment therein. 'For this we have been loaded with a great deal 'of hard Speeches, which we would deſire to bear 'patiently, ſuch as, our having fallen from the 'Teſtimony, &c. But how can that be ſaid of 'us, either reaſonably or religiouſly? Did we ever 'ſee it our Duty to eſpouſe it as a Part of our 'Teſtimony, that the *Burgeſs Oath* is *ſinful?* Was 'it ever eſpouſed as the Teſtimony of the Church 'of *Scotland* in any of her Judicatories before? 'Was it ever any Part of the publick Teſtimony 'of the Witneſſes, that ſuffered for *Scotland*'s co-'venanted Reformation, who, ſurely took it in 'theſe Times, when Matters, as to the publick 'Profeſſion and Settlement of Religion, were ſad 'enough, nay, worſe than now? If this be the 'Caſe, how are we ſaid to be Apoſtates? But fur-'ther, for our going into an Act of the Import, 'as above, we are proteſted againſt, as an unlaw-'ful Court, and in conſequence thereof, a *Synod*, 'as they call it, is *conſtitute*; but, as I cannot ſee 'a Warrant from *Zion*'s King ſo to do, ſo I can-'not *give Place* to this *Conſtitution*, no, *not for an 'Hour*, for theſe Reaſons:

'1. It would import that the Synod, which 'was conſtitute regularly in the Name of the glo-'rious Head, had, by their Management in the 'above Cauſe, forfeited their Right, in God's 'ſight, of being a lawful Court, ſo that the great 'Huſbandman was ſaying, *Take the Charge of my 'Vineyard from them, and give it unto others:* Who-'ever dare aſſert he ſays ſo, they are bold; for, 'he hates putting away, for all that we have done 'againſt him.

'2. They have made it eſſential to this their 'Conſtitution, that it be declared, that the Mini-'ſters and Elders, who were of the regularly con-'ſtitute Synod, have forfeited all Right to any Part 'of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; and

'that

'that they cannot conſtitute any lawful Court, nor 'any of them be admitted Members of any law-'fully conſtitute Court; and ſo, the Lord's People 'cannot own us as lawful Officers: So eſſential it 'is to their Conſtitution, that we be all cut off, 'unleſs we return by Acknowledgment. Ah! 'what a ſad Paſs are we come to! Is this our Re-'gard to the parting Command of our Lord, *Love 'one another?* Is this the Way we *remember the 'Day* we *ſtood before the Lord in Horeb*, when 'the Synod ſwore, with uplifted Hands, to the 'moſt high God, to ſtrengthen one another's 'Hands, while we are reſolved through Grace to 'adhere to a covenanted Reformation? Only, we 'have different Views of the Meaning of an Oath, 'never before conſidered; and, in Proſecution of 'this melancholy Act, it is that we are juſt now 'ſhut out: Wherefore, although it be with deep 'Regret that I appear on the oppoſite ſide of 'any of the Miniſters or Elders here preſent, 'judging it Duty, and inclining to take the Ad-'vice God gave to *Judah*, when the ten Tribes 'revolted, *Go not forth to War againſt your Bre-'thren*; yet, as we are called to give the Reaſon 'of our Hope, and againſt Deeds we muſt teſti-'fy, I leave my Teſtimony with you, in all Hu-'mility, againſt the ſaid new Conſtitution of Sy-'nod, and this Preſbytery's conſtituting in Subor-'dination thereto, as not agreeable to the Word 'of God, who ſaid, *Let all Things be done decently 'and in Order.* Obadiah 13, 14. *Thou ſhouldſt 'not have looked on thy Brother in the Day of his 'Calamity; thou ſhouldſt not have ſtood in the croſs 'Way, to cut off theſe that did eſcape.* Gal. 4. 17. *They zealouſly affect you, but not well; yea, they 'would exclude you, that ye might affect them.* Song 5. 7. *The Watchmen that went about the City 'found me, they ſmote me, they wounded me: The 'Keepers of the Walls took away my Vail from me.*

'As

'As also I leave my Testimony against it, as 'not having a Precedent in the Christian Church-'es so far as I know: Likewise, as it is a rending 'of the Synod, and inferior Courts, and the whole 'Association, when under the strongest and most 'solemn Ties, to live together as Brethren; and 'by which a Fire is kindled upon the Lord's Vine, 'which he brought out of *Egypt*, whereby it is 'like to be burnt up, and is become a Scorn to all 'those that pass by, *Psal* 80. And as I do in all 'Meekness testify against this Presbytery's constitu-'ting as above, so also against it, in prosecuting 'the above Acts of Constitution, in casting us out, 'and thereby denuding us of the Privilege we 'have from *Zion*'s King, to sit and join with you, 'in carrying on a Testimony for *Scotland*'s cove-'nanted Reformation, and relieving the Lord's 'scattered Flock through the Land; I say, to join 'with you in a Presbyterial Capacity as formerly 'constitute, under the orderly constitute Synod 'met at *Edinburgh* in *April* last, in the new Church 'of *Bristol*, and adjourned to meet at *Stirling*, *June* 'next; to which I hold myself subject. And fi-'nally, I testify against it, as being the melan-'choly Cause of perplexing and distressing the 'Minds of the Lord's poor People, and scattering 'them who were already scattered upon the Moun-'tains, in this dark and cloudy Day. If it were 'an Enemy that reproached us, dealt so with us, 'and against whom we were to testify, we could 'have born it: But alas! it is *thou mine equal, mine 'Acquaintance, with whom I took sweet Counsel to-'gether*, &c. May I not now say, *Is there any Sor-'row like my Sorrow?* But yet there is Hope, for 'he hates putting away; for, *Jer.* 31. 37. *Thus 'saith the Lord, if Heaven above can be measured, 'and the Foundations of the Earth searched out be-'neath, then will I cast off all the Seed of Israel, 'for all that they have done, saith the Lord.*

'Now, although it is Duty to receive with Reverence and Submiſſion the Deciſions of Courts of Chriſt, not only becauſe of their Conſonancy with the Word, but alſo becauſe of the Authority thereof, in nothing contrary to the Word; yet God alone is Lord of the Conſcience, and has the ſupreme Command there, by his Word; and unto this Word, all the Sentences and Deciſions of lawful and unlawful Courts are ſubjected: Therefore, and for the above Reaſons, I hold my Office, which the Lord Jeſus has given me, notwithſtanding of any ſuch Sentence, which I reckon null and void in itſelf, as not having the Authority of the Head of the Church.

JAMES BEUGO.

Thereafter Mr. *Ralph Erſkine* called the *Preſbytery*, by reading the Paper mentioned in the foregoing *Narrative*.

And immediately upon the Reading thereof, we removed from that unwarrantable Meeting of Miniſters and Elders, who had thus left their former Holding, and ſat down upon this new Footing foreſaid.

Wherefore conſidering that though our Number was reduced very low, by Reaſon of the greater Part of our Brethren, Miniſters and Elders deſerting us, and continuing in that unlawful Meeting, yet that the Lord hath in his Goodneſs remembred Mercy in the midſt of Wrath, and hath not left our Number to be leſs than that which he hath left a Promiſe in his Word unto, that he will grant his gracious Preſence to guide them, when they gather together for Judgment about the Affairs of his Houſe, and meet and conſtitute in his Name to bind or looſe on Earth; he having in Faithfulneſs promiſed, and undertaken to confirm their Sentences, if agreeable to the Spirit's Direction in the Scriptures, by binding, or looſing whatſoever

ſoever they ſhall thus bind and looſe, and by promiſing that, *If two of you ſhall agree on Earth, as touching any Thing that they ſhall aſk, it ſhall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midſt of them, Matth.* 18. 19, 20. For theſe Reaſons, and others we might mention, we continued to conſtitute, and meet in Preſbytery, as formerly: In Regard we had the Promiſe of Chriſt's Preſence to put Truſt in, and as we profeſſed to believe that our Power and Strength, in a Preſbyterial Capacity, does not conſiſt in Numbers, but in the Accompliſhment of the Promiſe of Chriſt's Preſence with us, when we meet according to his Appointment in his Name: So when we ſaw the Brethren in the foreſaid unlawful Meeting, ſuſpending us, in their View *judicially*, from our Miniſtry, we found ourſelves laid under a Neceſſity, either to aſſert our Power immediately, to continue in the Exerciſe of our Office, by conſtituting into our former Preſbytery, or elſe, practically to ſubmit to their unjuſt Sentence of Suſpenſion, which they pretended to put in Execution upon us, as far as poſſibly they could; yea, had we not conſtitute at that Time, we had not only ſo far ſubmitted to their pretended Power, they had aſſumed; or rather by which they preſumed to ſuſpend us from all Parts of our Office, and particularly from our Right to ſit in Preſbytery: But we had alſo, both loſt an Opportunity, the Lord had put in our Power to bear witneſs againſt their new Conſtitution, *judicially*; and condemning their new Courſes *practically*: And we had alſo rejected the Promiſe of Chriſt's Preſence with us in Preſbytery, *Matth.* 18. 20. if we had neglected to embrace it at ſuch a Time, when a Truſt he had committed unto us was denied, and our Right or Privilege to enjoy his Preſence in Preſbytery was refuſed; ſo that we behoved either to ſay

as our Brethren required in order to ſit with them; and give up with a Part of our *Truſt* to them, and neglect the gracious Promiſe of his powerful, as well as gracious and guiding Preſence to us in Presbytery; or elſe to embrace his Promiſe, and meet in his Name, who gave us this Authority; and we deſire to *thank Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, who hath enabled us, for that he counted us faithful, putting us into the Miniſtry*; and as we *did* then *conſtitute* as formerly, in a Dependance on his Promiſe; ſo we ſtill expect our Strength conſiſts *only* in the Accompliſhment of it; and we are reſolved, that thro' Grace, we *will conſtantly go on in the Strength of God the Lord.*

Mr. *Johnſton* having been occaſionally at *Alloa*, lodged in a Room where the *Minutes* of the *new Meeting* of Miniſters and Elders within the Bounds of the *Aſſociate Presbytery* of *Dunfermline*, were left by the *Clerk* of the ſaid pretended Meeting, judged it his Duty to embrace the Opportunity which Providence, entirely without any foreſight of his, had put into his Hands, of taking an exact Copy of the Minutes of the ſaid *Meeting* at *Perth* on the 5th of *May* laſt, when all that is related in the preceeding *Narrative*, was tranſacted, that the World may ſee from their own *Minutes*, that the ſaid *Meeting* of Miniſters and Elders, did actually give up with their *former Conſtitution*, and did ſit down upon a *new* one.

The Tenor of the ſaid Minutes, ſo far as they concern the preceeding *Narrative*, is as follows.

'AT *Perth*, in the new Church, *May* 5. 1747. Which Day and Place, the Aſſociate Presbytery of *Perth* and *Dunfermline* met, and conſtitute with Prayer by Mr. *Thomas Mair*, Moderator.

'The

'The Presbytery agreed to read the Acts and 'Proceedings of the Associate Synod, that met at 'Edinburgh in April last, which was done accord-'ingly, the Tenor whereof follows:——After read-'ing of the said Minutes, they proceeded to make 'up the Roll; and there were present of Ministers 'Mr. Thomson, Mr. Moncrieff, Mr. Brown, and 'Mr. Campbell, with the Moderator; of Elders, 'William Henderson, from Abernethy; and Thomas 'Bogie, from Lesly; were absent of Elders, Alex-'ander Lyle from Burntisland; and David Donald-'son from Ceres.

'The Presbytery agreed, that the following 'Question should be put, viz. Whether they 'should constitute themselves in a Presbytery, in 'Subordination to the Associate Synod, as pre-'sently constitute, Or not? And the Roll being 'called, and Votes marked, it carried unanimously, 'constitute; wherefore the Presbytery did, and 'hereby do constitute themselves as a Presbytery, 'in Subordination to the Associate Synod, as pre-'sently constitute.

'Mr. Ralph Erskine having read a Paper of Se-'cession from this Presbytery, as now constitute; 'and Mr. Johnston having declared, that he was 'to join in Presbytery with any that acknowledg-'ed themselves in Subordination, to what he cal-'led the Synod to meet at Stirling in June next; 'and James Beugo having declared, that he was 'to maintain the Exercise of his Office in Subor-'dination, to what he called the Synod, to meet 'at Stirling; and they having all withdrawn; and 'Mr. Erskine having in his above Paper pretended 'to assume a Power to himself, and these adhering 'to him, to constitute themselves into a Presbytery 'in a private House at Perth, at Seven o'Clock 'this Night; the following Overture was propos-'ed, That the Presbytery should find Mr. Ralph

Erskine,

'*Erskine*, Mr. *James Johnston*, and *James Beugo* 'censurable; not only for justifying that Part 'they acted at the Synod, in Conjunction with the 'prevailing Party at *Edinburgh* in *April* last, but 'also for their present Conduct; and that the Pres-'bytery resolve to proceed against them in due 'Time, according to the Rules of the Church, 'under the Direction of the Associate Synod, to 'inflict such Censure upon them as they deserve; 'and this Overture being read once and again, the 'Question was put, Approve of the said Overture, 'Or not? And the Roll being called, and Votes 'marked, it carried unanimously, *approve*. Where-'fore the Presbytery did, and hereby *do* find Mr. '*Ralph Erskine*, Mr. *Johnston*, and *James Beugo* 'censurable; not only for justifying the Part which 'they acted at the Synod at *Edinburgh* in *April* 'last, in Conjunction with the prevailing Party, 'but also for their present Conduct; and the Pres-'bytery *did*, and hereby *do* resolve to proceed 'against them in due Time, according to the Rules 'of the Church under the Direction of the Asso-'ciate Synod, to inflict such Censure upon them, 'as they may be found to deserve.

'Mr. *John Erskine* having acknowledged before 'the Presbytery, the Sinfulness of his Conduct in 'joining with the prevailing Party in the Synod 'at that Meeting at *Edinburgh* in *April* last, and 'approved of the Synod's Constitution upon the '10th of the said Month, particularly their con-'demning the first and second Resolutions carried 'by the prevailing Party; as likewise the Act and 'Declarator of the Synod concerning the Power 'of the Synod being *devolved* from the prevailing 'Party upon them; and that the prevailing Party 'had fallen from all Right and Title to the Keys 'of the Kingdom of Heaven, as to any present 'actual Exercise of them; and likewise declared 'his Acquiescence in the Questions added to the

'For-

'Formula, and his willingneſs to *take his Seat* in 'this Presbytery *as now* conſtitute in Subordina-'tion to the Synod as preſently conſtitute! and the 'Queſtion being put, Receive Mr. *John Erskine* 'as a Member of the Presbytery upon this ac-'knowledgment and Declaration, Or not? And 'the Roll being called, and Votes marked, it 'carried unanimouſly, *receive*: Wherefore the 'Presbytery received him, and he took his Seat 'accordingly, and his Name was added to the 'Roll.

'Adjourned till after Six, to meet at the ſame 'Place. Cloſed with Prayer.

'*Eodem loco et die, hora ſeptima poſt meridiem.* After 'Prayer by the Moderator, *Sederunt ut ſupra.*

'The Minutes of laſt Sederunt were read.

'Mr. *William Mair* having come up to this 'Diet, the two Queſtions added by the Synod to 'the Formula were read to him, and he declared 'his Satisfaction therewith; he likewiſe declared 'his Satisfaction with the preſent Conſtitution of 'the Synod, and his Willingneſs to take his Seat 'as a Member of this Presbytery, as *now* conſti-'tute in Subordination to the Synod, as preſently 'conſtitute: Likewiſe, *David Keltie*, Ruling El-'der from *Muckhart*, declared his willingneſs to 'take his Seat in the Presbytery as *now* conſtitute; 'the Queſtion was put, *receive* the ſaid Mr. *Wil-'liam Mair* and *David Keltie*, as Members of this 'Presbytery, upon the above Declaration, Or 'not? And the Roll being called, and Votes mark-'ed, it carried unanimouſly, *receive*: Wherefore 'the Presbytery received them both, and they 'took their Seats accordingly; and their Names 'were added to the Roll.

'The Presbytery proceeded to receive Petitions.

'Read a Petition from *Coupar* of *Angus* craving 'a Diſjunction from *Dundee*, and frequent Supply.

'The

'The *Community* in *Coupar* of *Angus* having given in a Petition for a *Disjunction* from *Dundee*; and frequent Supply, the Presbytery agreed to grant them Supply.

'Extracted *in Short-hand Characters* out of the Minutes of the *new Meeting* of Associate Ministers in the Bounds of the Associate Presbytery of *Dunfermline* and *Perth*, at *Alloa*, *Friday* the 14th *August* 1747; and extended afterward by

JA. JOHNSTON, V. D. M.

It will be proper to make the following *Observations*, upon the above *Minutes*:

1. That the foresaid *Ministers* did constitute themselves into what they called a *Presbytery*, upon a Footing entirely *new*, and in a Way of giving up with their *former Constitution* and *Subordination*, and must therefore have a *Testimony quite new*, as the *Basis* or Foundation of their *new Constitution*.

2. That whereas they pretend to find Mr. *Ralph Erskine*, Mr. *James Johnston*, and *James Bengo*, *censurable*, it is evident, that the only Ground of such a Sentence, was, their adhering to their *former Constitution*, and refusing to take up *new Ground*, when they could see neither Scripture *Patern* nor *Precept* warranting them so to do: This was their *present Conduct*, for which they are found *censurable* by that *Meeting*; for as to their justifying the only lawful and right constitute *Synod* which met, and continued their Meetings in *Bristol Kirk* near *Edinburgh*, in *April* last, in Opposition to a separating and *schismatical Meeting* in Mr. *Gib*'s House at that Time, it was no more than a justifying the *former Constitution* of the *Associate Synod* and *Presbyteries* in Subordination thereto, in Opposition to the *new Constitution*, which the *separating Party* had most preposterously run into.

3. Whereas the *Minutes* say, that "Mr. *Ralph* "*Erskine* read a Paper of Secession from this Pres-

"bytery

"Presbytery as now constitute." This is not Matter of Fact; for Mr. *Erskine* did not look upon them as *lawfully constitute* in their *new Subordination*; and therefore did not properly *secede* from them, but called them to meet with him, in the only lawful and right constitute *Associate Presbytery* of *Dunfermline*, in Subordination to the *Synod* which was to meet at *Stirling* in *June* next.

4. There is a *false*, at least a most unfair Representation of a memorable Matter of Fact, in the above *Minutes*, which is this, The *Minutes* insinuate, that Mr. *John Erskine* was added to the *Roll* as a Member of Presbytery, *after* their pretended Sentence was passed upon his Father, and those adhering to him; but the plain Truth was this, Mr. *John Erskine* made his Acknowledgment, owned their new Constitution, was received and enrolled *before*, and sat as a *Judge* when his Father was condemned by that *Meeting*, in the Sight of Mr. *Johnston*, and some Hundreds of Witnesses who can attest it, which was like the putting of a Sword into his Hands, to sheathe it in his Father's Bowels, accordingly Mr. *Erskine* said to Mr. *Johnston*, with a sorrowful Heart, it was *Parricide*. But tho' that *Meeting* was so cruel to Mr. *Erskine*, as to enrol his Son, that he might be a Judge in condemning and casting out his Father, yet, as may be conjectured, when they reflected, that this was a Practice which never had a Precedent in any Court Civil or Ecclesiastick; and that it would not go down with the unprejudiced, and likewise in order to impose upon Strangers to this Story, who may see or get Extracts hereof, they mark in their *Minutes* the *Inrolment* of the *Son*, AFTER the pretended Sentence passed upon his *Father*, which was a Piece of *Juggle* and *Trick*, so much the more intolerable, as it was done by Men, pretending to call themselves a *Court of Christ*.

5. The Community of *Coupar* in *Angus* apply for a *Disjunction* from *Dundee*, and frequent Supply; the *Minutes* bear, that without disjoining them, Supply of preaching is granted. Now, as the foresaid People are a Part of Mr. *Johnston*'s Congregation; and as they still continue to be so, in as much as they are not disjoined, the granting *supply* in this Case, without Mr. *Johnston*'s Concurrence or Allowance, was a manifest *Intrusion* upon his Congregation. This Piece of Conduct induced Mr. *Johnston* to write a *Letter* to them lately, which he delivered to a *Minister* of their own Number, who promised to show it to them; a Part of which *Letter* is as follows. "——— 'Tis not only common "Justice, but Obedience to God, I am demanding "from you, when I ask at you, upon what *Scrip-* "*ture Warrant*, or, on what Footing you granted "Supply to intrude upon my Congregation? For "Proof of my Charge, read 1 *Peter* iii. 15. and "you'll see that if this is refused, you'll sin against "a plain Commandment. — I am sorry to see that "in your *new Meeting*, you have taken a *new* "*Method* of not marking Matter of Fact. — I am "sorry indeed to observe you juggled so. — I wish "your Reformation. — and am, *&c.*"

Thus far concerning a *Narrative* of the *Separation* of the Majority of Members from the *Associate Presbytery* of *Dunfermline*. It is Time now, according to what was promised in the *Title Page*, to present the *Reader* with

A COPY of a LETTER sent by the *Members* of the *Associate Synod* which met at *Stirling* in *June* 1747, to their *separating Brethren*, proposing a *Meeting* with them for *Prayer* and *Conference* anent our *present Differences*.

The said Letter was subscribed in Name of the rest of the Brethren, by Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine*, and directed to the Rev. Mr. *Thomas Mair*, Minister of the Gospel at *Orwell*. The Tenor whereof follows:

R. D. B.

R. D. B.

'The Members of the Associate Synod that 'met in this Place, having in the Interval of one 'of their Meetings, communed together extraju-'dicially, anent the Circumstances which you and 'we are brought into in adorable Providence; 'and considering, that whereas it is supposed there 'are two Associate Synods at present, acting in 'Opposition to one another, what fatal and perni-'cious Consequence this must necessarily have a-'mong the People under our Inspection, both in 'this Country and elsewhere is evident, as tending 'natively to break and rend them to Pieces, and 'consequently, marring the Success of the Gospel; 'and hindering the Progress of witnessing Work 'among them; and opening the Mouths of Ene-'mies against the Testimony for the covenanted 'Reformation, we all equally profess to main-'tain; and thus hardning the present Generation 'in their Atheism, Infidelity, and Opposition to the 'Way of God and Godliness, and to the Name 'and Honour of our Lord Jesus Christ.

'Therefore the Brethren were unanimously of 'Opinion, that however wide the present Breach 'is made in holy Providence between you and 'them, yet it is their Duty to pursue Peace with 'their Brethren, even when it seems to fly from 'them; and to endeavour that no Mean be neglec-'ted on their Part, for healing the Breach, and 'preventing the Continuation of such a dismal 'Rupture. For this End, they agree to propose 'unto you, that there be a Meeting betwixt you 'and them, in order to Prayer and Conference, 'for trying whether it is possible we can be brought 'to coalesce in the Unity of the Spirit and the Bond 'of Peace; and for endeavouring as it becomes 'these that love the Truth and Peace, to be found '(in the Use of such appointed Means) waiting 'upon him who is the God of Peace, that can

'bruise Satan under their Feet; and saying, *Come* '*and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn* '*and he will heal us, he hath smitten us and will bind* '*us up.* That the Design of the foresaid Propo-'sal might not be frustrate, the Brethren did not 'chuse to make it in a judicial Way, nor intend 'the Conference should be upon the Footing of 'Church-authority, but merely as Brethren equal-'ly bound by our Covenant of Peace and Love, to 'cultivate Harmony in the Lord, that his Name 'may yet be honoured among us, his People ce-'mented, and his Work advanced. This in the 'Name, and at the Desire of the Brethren here, 'is from,

R. D. B.

Your's most affectionately in the Lord,

Stirling, June 19*th* 1747. EBENEZER ERSKINE.

P. S. 'With Submission it is proposed, that the 'Time and Place of Meeting be at *Dunfermline*, 'Tuesday the 21*st* of *July*. Your Answer is 'expected as soon as possible, that in case the 'Motion is refused, I may have Access to pre-'vent the unnecessary up-coming of the Brethren 'at that Time.

'I need not add, in Regard the Nature 'of the Thing bears it, that this be communi-'cate to all the Brethren in Connection with 'you on your side of the River. Another Copy 'of what is above is sent to Mr. *Gib*, to be com-'municate to the Brethren concern'd on the 'South-side of *Forth*.

The ANSWERS by Mr. *Mair* and Mr. *Gib* in Name of others of their Brethren, printed from the *Originals*, and both of them directed to the Rev. Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine* Minister of the Gospel at *Stirling*, are as follow,

R. and D. B.

R. and D. B.

'I received your Missive, which I communicated to the Brethren who were met here; we are heartily sorry for the present Posture of Affairs, but desire to adore the Lord in his Dispensations of Providence, hoping that though they are humbling to us, yet by them he will exalt himself. The Affair you write of concerns the Associate Synod; and the Method of Coalescence you mention, or the Way of being received back to a Seat in the Synod, is notour to you, and the Brethren with you, from the Acts and Proceedings of the Synod; from all which it is easy to learn how you are to apply yourselves unto them at their Meeting the first Tuesday of *August* next. Though it is our Endeavour to pray heartily for you every Day, and although we do maintain all due Regard to you and the Brethren, yet your Proposals are absolutely inconsistent with supporting the Testimony of the Day, which we could shew from many Reasons, most of which we believe, may easily occur to yourselves, and which we forbear to narrate particularly, lest it should prove rather irritating, than a Mean of softening you. Wishing the Lord may incline you to fall in with the healing Measures laid down in the Acts of the Synod, and make you sensible how far you have increased your Fault, by constituting yourselves unwarrantably into a pretended Synod; and offering dutiful Respects to you, and the Brethren with you. This in Name, and at the Desire of all the Brethren here, is all at present from,

R. and D. B.

Your affectionate Brother,

And humble Servant in the Lord,

Muckart, June 24*th* 1747. THOMAS MAIR.

V. R. D. F.

V. R. D. F.

'Having received your Letter of *June* 19*th*, 'and having embraced the first proper Occasion 'for communicating the same to my Brethren con-'cern'd on this Side of the River, by doing 'so betwixt Scderunts, to such of them as met 'here this Week in Presbytery; the Answer now 'made is common.

'As to the mournful Circumstances which we 'are brought into with some dear Fathers and 'Brethren, we desire both to seek and submit unto 'the Healing thereof, in all suitable Ways: But 'we have no Freedom to fall in with the Propo-'sal made by the Brethren you speak of; consider-'ing, on the one Hand, that they have plainly in-'terwoven with their Proposal, an Assertion of 'their Synodical Constitution, a Justification of 'their own Conduct in the present Affair, and a 'Condemnation of the Associate Synod;—and con-'sidering, on the other Hand, that the Affair writ 'of is the Synod's Work, which is *hactenus judi-'cata*,—so that the Method of Coalescence is al-'ready concluded upon.

'But not chusing to enlarge here, the above is 'offered, and in Name of the Brethren foresaid,— 'with dutiful Respects to the Brethren with you, 'by,

V. R. D. F.

Your's regardfully,

Edin. July 11*th* 1747. ADAM GIB.

The following *Observations* upon the above *Letters* will be obvious to the *Reader*.

1. That the *Letter* from the *Brethren* who met at *Stirling*, was entirely *extrajudicial*; whereby it was supposed, that any reasonable Ground of Umbrage, against a *Meeting* for *Conference* and *Prayer*, would be removed. Besides, the *Letter* is written

in

in ſuch a Strain, as to ſhun any *preſent* Diſapprobation of the Conduct of the *ſeparating Brethren*, till it ſhould appear if the Meeting would take Place. It is appealed to the World, if any more could be done by the *Brethren* who met at *Stirling*, to procure a *Conference*, without laying down the *Miniſtry* which they *received from the Lord Jeſus*, at the *Feet* of their *ſeparating Brethren*, which it was not in their Power lawfully to do.

2. It is plain from the Tenor of both the above *Anſwers*, that there can be no Meeting with the *ſeparating Brethren*, but in a Way of coming directly to their *Bar*, and thereby approving of their *new Conſtitution*, and all the harſh and ſevere *Sentences*, which they, *themſelves only*, FIND *behind Backs*, without the leaſt Shadow of Scripture or Reaſon to ſupport them; and without ſo much as *deſiring* theſe on whom they paſs'd their Sentences, to be *preſent* to anſwer for themſelves, contrary to all Law, divine and human, *John* 7. 50, 51. *Nicodemus ſaith unto them,— doth our Law judge any Man before it hear him, and know what he doth?*

3. The *firſt Anſwer* is by far too much upon the *Jeſt*, when it ſays, 'The Method of Coaleſcence 'you mention, or the Way of being received *back* 'to a *Seat* in the *Synod*,' as if the *Brethren* who met at *Stirling*, had ſpoken of being *received back* to their *Seat in Synod*; but it is plain from their above *Letter*, that they only propoſe 'a Meeting— 'in order to Conference and Prayer, for trying 'whether through the Mercy of our God, we can 'be brought to coaleſce, in the *Unity of the Spirit*, 'and *Bond of Peace*.' And there is far from being the leaſt Mention, of being *received back to a Seat in the Synod*, in Regard, that theſe foreſaid *Brethren* had *before*, and *ſtill have* their *Seat*, in the *only lawful* and *rightly conſtitute aſſociate Synod*.

4. Whereas the foreſaid *Anſwer* aſſerts, that, what it calls, *the Way of being received back to a*

Seat

Seat in the Synod, 'is NOTOUR from the *Acts* 'and *Proceedings* of the *Synod*.' It muſt be obſerved, That *that Way*, be what it will, could not be *notour*, at that Time, from the *Acts* and *Proceedings* mentioned, for this good Reaſon, that theſe *Acts* and *Proceedings* were not *publiſhed* for about a *Month* after the Date of the *firſt Anſwer*. But it ſeems, as they dealt with the People, upon the Argument of *implicit Faith*, they want to knock down their *Brethren* by the *ſame Weapon*.

5. Whereas they ſay, 'It is our Endeavour to 'pray heartily for you every Day:' It may be *remarked*, that if their *private* and *ſecret Prayers* are to be meaſured by their *publick* ones, it is well known that their *publick Prayers* have run in ſuch a Strain, as to repreſent their *Brethren* as *Apoſtates* from the *whole* of the *Teſtimony*, which tends to alienate the Affections of their *Flocks* from them, and to *break* their *Miniſtry*, although the whole World cannot condeſcend upon any one *Truth* of God, they have departed from.

6. They ſay, 'Your Propoſals are abſolutely 'inconſiſtent with ſupporting the Teſtimony of the 'Day.' It is *anſwered*, that the *Brethren* who met at *Stirling*, made no moe *Propoſals* but *one*, as is clear from the above *Letter*, and that was a *Propoſal* of a *Meeting* for *Prayer* and *Conference*; and if ſuch a *Propoſal* be *inconſiſtent with the Teſtimony of the Day*, it muſt certainly be a *new* and *ſtrange* Kind of a *Teſtimony*, never heard tell of before. But the foreſaid *Brethren* deſire to truſt and hope, that both they, and all in the *three Kingdoms*, ſhall be preſerved from ſuch a *Teſtimony*, as is *inconſiſtent* with, and *cannot admit* of *Prayer* and *Conference*.

7. They are pleaſed to ſay, that the *Meaſures laid down*, in what they call, the *Acts and Proceedings of Synod*, are *healing* ones. It can ſcarce be thought they are in *earneſt*, but rather *inſulting* over their *Brethren*, when they call the *Meaſures* laid

laid down in their pretended *Acts*, HEALING MEASURES. It may be aſked, if ever there were more *arbitrary* and *tyrannical Acts* and *Proceedings*, paſſed and gone into, by any Body of Men pretending to be a *Court of Chriſt*, in any Period, than theſe, which they call their *healing Meaſures*. For Inſtance, to FIND, *in Abſence*, that their *Brethren* had *dropt the whole of the Lord's Cauſe and Teſtimony*. That they have *fallen from all Right and Title to any preſent actual Exerciſe of the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, committed by the Lord Jeſus to the Office-bearers of his Houſe*: And conſequently, *are not to be acknowledged as Miniſters of Chriſt, by any who are cleaving to the Lord's Cauſe and Teſtimony*: And after all, the only *healing Meaſure* propoſed, is a Submitting to all this *unparalleled Procedure*, and an *implicit Owning* of their *new Conſtitution*, and all the *ſtrange Proceedings* that have followed thereupon. If theſe be *healing Meaſures*, let the World judge.

8. They wiſh *the Lord may make their Brethren ſenſible, how far they have increaſed their Fault, by conſtituting themſelves unwarrantably into a pretended Synod*. Nothing can be more out of the Way than this; for *they*, and the *Brethren* were met in the *ſame Synod* at *Edinburgh*, *April* 1747. which was *conſtitute* by Mr. *Thomas Mair*, as *Moderator* of the preceeding *Synod*; *they*, and the *Brethren* who wrote the above *Letter* to them, *voted jointly* in the Choice of a *new Moderator*, they ſat in *ſeveral Meetings* of that *Synod*; and when they *went off*, the *Majority* of the *Members*, with the *Moderator* and *Clerk*, remained in the *ſame Synod*, and continued to meet in the *ſame Place*, till they ended their publick Buſineſs, and adjourned to *Stirling* in *June* thereafter. So that nothing can be more intolerable, than to ſay, they *conſtituted themſelves into a Synod*, when it was the *ſeparating Brethren only*, who pretended to do this; and accordingly have publiſhed *Acts* ASSERTING,

and FURTHER ASSERTING *the Conſtitution and Rights* of their *new Meeting*.

Upon the Whole, it may be obſerved, That the *Hue* and *Cry*, raiſed by the *ſeparating Brethren*, againſt thoſe who have been helped by Grace to be as faithful in their Day as themſelves, and all under a Diſguiſe of Zeal for *new Reformation*, ſeems to be too like the Practice of theſe in *Jeremiah*'s Time, who ſaid, *Jer.* 18. 18. *Come and let us deviſe Devices againſt Jeremiah; for the Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor Counſel from the wiſe, nor the Word from the Prophet: Come, and let us ſmite him with the Tongue, and let us not give heed to any of his Words.* But in the mean Time, this lamentable *Diviſion* among the *witneſſing Remnant* at this Day, gives Occaſion to the Enemies of the Lord's Cauſe, to ſay as it is, *Lam.* 2. 16. *We have ſwallowed her up. Certainly this is the Day that we looked for, we have found, we have ſeen it.*

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FINIS.

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The following Pamphlets, lately publiſhed, are to be ſold by JOHN NEWLANDS, *at his Shop in the Head of the* Gallowgate, Glaſgow, *and by the Bookſellers in Town and Country.*

I. *Heaven Poſ'd and Preſs'd with Queſtions and Demands:* Or, *Faith's Freedoms with God warranted.* A Sermon preached at *Glaſgow, Monday, July* 21*ſt*, 1746. After the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper* was adminiſtred there: And enlarged at *Burntiſland*, after an Occaſion of the ſame Nature there.

II. *Clean Water:* Or, *The Pure and Precious Blood of Chriſt, for the Cleanſing of polluted Sinners.* A Sermon on *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. Preached immediately before the Adminiſtration of the *Sacrament* of the *Lord's Supper* at *Dunfermline, Auguſt* 10*th*, 1746.
The above Two by the Rev. Mr. *Ralph Erskine.*

III. The LAWFULNESS of the Religious Clauſe of ſome Burgeſs Oaths aſſerted, in ſeveral Remarks upon ſome Notes of Sermons, delivered by ſome Brethren, upon a late Sacramental Occaſion.

IV. A REVIEW of a PAMPHLET, intitled, A ſerious Enquiry into the Burgeſs Oaths of *Edinburgh, Perth*, and *Glaſgow*. Wherein the moſt material Arguments againſt the Burgeſs Oath are impartially weighed and examined. By the Rev. Mr. *James Fiſher.*

V. The TRUE STATE of the *Queſtion*, upon which a *Breach* followed in the *Aſſociate Synod*, at *Edinburgh, Thurſday April* 9. 1747. By the Rev. Mr. *Ebenezer Erskine.*

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